

## THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE UNITED STATES COINAGE.

---

In view of the great advances that France, England and other foreign countries are making in the matter of artistic coinage, (and ~~recognizing the fact that in the future those who wish to take up international commerce, must be familiar with the metric system, even if it does not come into use in our own country,~~ we beg to offer the following suggestions for your most careful consideration:-

First, that Congress be petitioned to authorize an entirely new coinage which shall be artistic in design) and ~~shall have a metric weight, diameter and thickness.~~ The entire coinage of the United States consists of 10 <sup>denominations.</sup> ~~or 12 pieces.~~

In order that the designs for the new coins shall be truly artistic in character, the best talent of the ~~best~~ artists of the country must be enlisted; and to this end it is necessary that ~~a~~ <sup>these</sup> ~~certain number of~~ artists should receive a just recompense for their designs. We recommend therefore:

I. That the sum of ten thousand dollars be appropriated for each special coin design or model, without regard to the monetary value, whether a cent or a twenty-dollar gold piece.

II. That the six best designs received for each piece shall be awarded one thousand dollars each from the above sum, <sup>of \$6000</sup> and that the committee hereinafter proposed shall have the right to select the best of the six designs, and accept

the model either ~~with or~~ without modification, to  
~~repeal~~ *all the alterations* ~~to be~~  
~~paying~~ the successful sculptor or modeler, an  
*competitor*  
 additional award of four thousand dollars. The  
 cost of the dies for each coin would then not  
 exceed ten thousand dollars. /

III. ~~That in order to render our coinage current~~  
over the entire world, there be stamped upon a  
small planchet or upon the side of each coin the  
following data:- the fineness, and the metric  
weight, diameter and thickness.

IV. That no artist shall make or design for ~~the~~<sup>an</sup> more than one coin in any one metal, gold, silver, copper or nickel, ~~at~~<sup>and</sup> the most being able to compete for four coins, one in each series. ~~and~~<sup>and</sup>

therein a part toward me any more  
he is disqualified to compete for any  
other Com in Est office.



V. That the committee to pass upon the models for the coins shall ~~be made up~~ <sup>consist</sup> of the President of the United States, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of the Mint, one member each from the Senate and the House of Representatives, three numismatists ~~who would be familiar with all the shapes and possibilities of coins, and three~~ <sup>sculptor and one painter</sup> ~~well-known artists.~~

The following further suggestions may also be presented, as of practical importance:-

VI. The coins need not necessarily be in very high relief. Some magnificent works of art have been executed in very low relief, as shown in the medallic art of the ~~15th, 16th, 17th and 19th~~ <sup>15th, 16th, 17th and 18th</sup> centuries. The coins should be of such sizes as to be commercially convenient, and should not be so irregular in surface as to afford opportunity for the accumulation of germs and the consequent risk of spreading disease.

VII. As by no less expensive means is it possible to reach more people, young and old, with a good artistic design than by a coin,- the art educating value of such a coinage will be at once

apparent. The poorest child in the most obscure hamlet would thus have the opportunity of knowing and seeing the works of the best living masters in art. ~~Every child in the land also would nat-~~

~~urally become familiar with the metric weight,~~

~~the metric thickness and the metric diameter.~~

~~The weight and measure would moreover be of great~~

~~advantage to the traveler from abroad or to any~~

~~one interested in international commerce. With-~~

~~out some use of the metric system, it will be~~

~~with great difficulty that the United States can~~

~~ever hope to attain a commercial supremacy.~~

VIII. ~~It might be advisable for Congress to set aside the sum of \$30,000 per year until the present coins are all replaced by an artistic metric currency, the pieces of lowest denominations in each metal being first minted.~~

IV. With regard to the expense involved, the National Gallery at London, the Louvre in Paris, and our own Metropolitan Museum of Art, would not hesitate to spend \$100,000 for a single very important painting. The Louvre actually paid a similar sum for a gold crown which has since been



~~almost conclusively proved to be of modern manu-~~  
~~facture, on account of the educational and artis-~~  
tic value of such objects. The price of a single  
painting of this kind would replace our entire  
metallic currency with a coinage that would prob-  
ably be unequalled in both beauty and utility by  
any nation on the globe, and would do much to  
remove from the United States the ~~threefold~~ insin-  
uation that we are not an artistic people, ~~and~~  
~~that we are unfamiliar with the accepted inter-~~  
~~national system of weights and measures.~~

on account of the educational  
and artistic value of such  
objects.